



Public Health Bulletin

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Pandemic Flu First Responder Drill Held in November

The San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department held a mass vaccination drill utilizing county employees and first responders on November 13 at fire departments in Grover Beach, Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo, and Paso Robles.

The purpose of the drill was two-fold: 1) to test the capacity of the Health Agency to administer vaccinations to large numbers of people rapidly in the event of a significant public health threat to the community and 2) to train county and local jurisdiction personnel on how to run a mass vaccination clinic.

The November drill was the third time the County has held a drill with the purpose of specifically vaccinating first responders and their family members. Points of distribution (PODs) like those set up on the 13th would be used in the event of a public health emergency to protect first responders and disaster service workers (all County employees) against an agent that might infect the population (e.g., pandemic influenza, smallpox, plague or anthrax).

Once disaster service workers

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California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) Results Are In

The California Health Interview Survey (CHIS) released its 2007 data last month on hundreds of topics affecting the health and well-being of Californians. The data reveal some noteworthy findings for the County of San Luis Obispo, especially for youth.

Generally, children under 5 years of age compare favorably with the rest of the state in many areas including: poverty status (38% in SLO County vs. 46% for California as a whole), good health status (85% vs. 75%) and medical insurance coverage (93 vs. 95%, no statistical difference).

Dental insurance for young children tells another story. Whereas 83% of all California's pre-schoolers have dental insurance, only 67% do in SLO County. Only two of 58 counties in the state had lower percentages.

In another finding, low-income teenagers throughout California

are almost three times more likely to be obese (21%) than teens from more affluent households (8%), according to analysis from the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

Fortunately, there are two new initiatives in SLO County aimed at addressing both problem areas. The recently convened Oral Health Coalition, funded by First 5 SLO, is embarking on an aggressive agenda of assuring primary prevention of dental disease, early detection of decay, and availability of treatment.

Similarly, using grant dollars from The California Endowment, HEAL-SLO (Healthy Eating Active Living-San Luis Obispo), a broad-based coalition formed to address the social and environmental influences on childhood obesity, is implementing pilot projects designed for systems change in

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Health Officer (cont.)

two highly impacted communities, Oceano and San Miguel.

And don't forget, there is still time to get a flu shot. Only 27% of SLO County residents did so in 2007, according to the CHIS.

For more information from the survey, go to www.chis.ucla.edu/.

OB Office Staff - Save the Date

Save the date for an in-service on Prenatal Substance Use and the 4 P Plus Program, "Why We Care" on January 28, 2009 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon.

No Alcohol During Pregnancy - Why Is It Important?

Alcohol use during pregnancy can cause physical and mental birth defects, preterm births, and miscarriages. Because a safe level of alcohol intake during pregnancy cannot be determined, both the U.S. Surgeon General and the March of Dimes Foundation recommend that pregnant women not consume any alcohol.

Keep this message alive and support every pregnant woman you know in not drinking when planning or during a pregnancy.

A reminder to all women: "Put down that drink if you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant" and "A pregnant woman never drinks alone."

A message from "Beginnings" of San Luis Obispo County...

Public Health Department Offers Free Smoking Cessation Classes, Services

As the New Year rolls around again, many people renew their resolutions to lose weight, exercise more, work less, and stop smoking. While the San Luis Obispo County Department of Public Health offers free smoking cessation classes year round, it is important to strike while the iron is hot, so to speak.

We offer classes in North and South County, the coastal area, and SLO. We also have a special interest and funding to work with the Babies First Breath Program, which addresses the needs of women who are pregnant and smoking, or living with people who smoke. In addition, we pay special attention to parents of children 0-5 years old; probably the most susceptible group affected by second and third hand smoke. If adults don't like it, they can leave the room, or boldly ask the smoker to refrain. However, most youngsters do not have the tools or words to express the need to be tobacco free. We usually think of cigarettes, but cannot forget about cigars, pipes and chew, which are just as harmful to children.

Our intention here at Tobacco Control is to meet every client where they are in their quitting process. This includes supporting them going cold turkey, or by helping to obtain quit aids. We would like to help as many smokers as we can and you can help us get the word out about our free services.

Together, we can do a lot to prevent the pain and agony of smoking related disease, illness and death. If you have any questions, or need more information, please contact us at 781-5564.

Beginnings Observes Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Awareness Day

On September 9, 2008, Beginnings, a community collaborative promoting healthy growth and development of mother and child, proudly accepted a proclamation by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors in recognition and support of International Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Awareness Day.

The first FASD Awareness Day was celebrated on September 9, 1999 (9/9/99). This day was chosen so that on the ninth day of the ninth month of the year, the world will remember that during the nine months of pregnancy a woman should abstain from alcohol. Every year on September 9, proclamations are issued in countries, states, provinces, and towns all around the world. Bells are rung at 9:09 a.m. in every time zone from New Zealand to Alaska. People all around the world gather for events to raise awareness about the dangers of drinking during pregnancy and the plight of individuals and families who struggle with FASD. Any time is a good time to raise awareness about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders.

Pandemic Flu First Responder Drill (cont.)

and first responders are safe from the infection, they would then be instructed to open further PODs for vaccinating the general population.

Approximately 1700 county employees, first responders, and their family members were vaccinated in an average time of less than 10 minutes per person at each

of the four sites. Those vaccinated received seasonal flu vaccine supplied through a variety of grant funded sources. Vaccines were administered for three consecutive hours in the morning and for an additional four hours in the afternoon.

At the conclusion of the event, each participant who received a

vaccine was asked to complete an exit survey. Survey results showed that 49% of participants said they have an emergency kit in their home and 65% said they have a family emergency plan.

A similar first responder vaccination drill is already being planned for fall 2009.

Method Change for Chlamydia-Gonorrhea Amplification Testing

The Public Health Laboratory is changing amplification methods for detecting chlamydia and gonorrhea in early January 2009.

The laboratory will introduce the Gen-Probe APTIMA method, generically called Transcription-Mediated Amplification, to detect infection by chlamydia trachomatis and neisseria gonorrhoeae, replacing the current method of Strand Displacement (BD Diagnostics).

The APTIMA method has better sensitivity than the current system and therefore more accurately detects low positive specimens. The APTIMA also employs specimen collection kits which have better specimen stability than the current method.

A single specimen collection kit ("Unisex") is used for endocervical or male urethral specimens. The new system also includes the only FDA-approved vaginal swab collection kit which allows clinician or self-collection within a clinical environment.

Both swab kits have a 60-day specimen stability at 2-30° C. The urine collection kit has a 30-day specimen stability at 2-30° C.

At the start of 2009, visits to collection sites will begin and collection kits will be replaced with new ones, along with a brief collection training session and a question and answer period.

If you have any questions or requests for educational materials,

please call Dr. Jim Beebe at 781-5512.

- **Why the change?** The APTIMA has superior sensitivity and allows for vaginal specimen collection as well as cervical, male urethral and male and female urine collections.
- **Will the fee change?** No
- **Will the laboratory report change?** No
- **Will the specimen collection change?** Urine and swab collectors must be the Gen-Probe brand. Vaginal swab collection is also available.

All Hazards Preparedness Workshop Slated for February

A special two-day hazard preparedness workshop has been scheduled for February 2009.

State experts will present a series of topics featuring incident response, occupational and environmental health, food safety in California, bioterrorism agents,

a table-top exercise for emergency response to an incident of agroterrorism/food safety, safe drinking water preparedness, explosive and radiological devices, pesticide dispersal, and more.

This workshop is currently being presented in Orange County

and has been attended by laboratory workers, clinical and public health specialists, hazmat team members, emergency medical staff, animal health specialists, agricultural experts and others.

Mark your calendars for February 26 and 27, 2009.

San Luis Obispo County Reported Cases of Selected Communicable Diseases - Winter 2009

Disease	Jan. - Sept.	October	November	December	Total 2008	Total 2007
AIDS/HIV	2/12	0/6	0/1	0/3	2/22	9/27
Amebiasis	1	0	0	0	1	0
Brucellosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Campylobacteriosis	36	2	1	6	45	49
Chlamydial Infections	457	73	59	45	634	629
Coccidioidomycosis	54	6	12	16	88	113
Cryptosporidiosis	8	0	0	0	8	18
E. Coli	5	0	1	0	6	4
Giardiasis	5	0	2	2	9	7
Gonorrhea	25	2	4	2	33	48
Hepatitis A	11	0	0	2	13	2
Hepatitis B	31	1	5	6	43	28
Hepatitis C Acute	9	1	0	3	13	3
Hepatitis, Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	0
Listeriosis	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lyme Disease	15	2	4	1	22	UNK
Measles (Rubeola)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meningitis - Total	23	2	1	1	27	9
Meningitis - Viral	18	1	1	2	22	17
Meningitis, H-Flu	0	0	0	0	0	1
Meningococcal Disease	0	1	0	0	1	0
MRSA	2	0	0	0	2	UNK
Pertussis	14	1	1	1	17	16
Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0
Salmonellosis	20	2	1	3	26	26
Shigellosis	2	6	0	0	8	4
Syphilis - Total	37	3	1	0	41	16
Tuberculosis	0	1	0	0	1	2
West Nile Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0
W. Nile Virus Neuroinvasive	0	0	0	0	0	0



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